

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Digital Repository

Volume 38 | Number 6

Article 13

1958

Their Classroom is Iowa

Gail Devens

Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Devens, Gail (1958) "Their Classroom is Iowa," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 38 : No. 6 , Article 13.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol38/iss6/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

Summer Extension Trainees

by Gail Devens

Home Economics Sophomore



Their Classroom is Iowa

WHAT IS IT to be an extension trainee for a summer in one of Iowa's counties?

It's helping 4-H members give a demonstration that wins a blue ribbon at the state fair.

It's finding your pajamas on top of the flagpole at 4-H camp.

It's meeting dozens of families eager to learn and accept what you say.

It's learning the "ropes" of extension from a county extension director, a youth assistant or a home economist.

Ask Jeannine Buehler, H. Ec. Sr., what it was like last summer in Grundy County as a trainee, and that's what she'll tell you. Or, ask any of the 40 Home Economics or Agriculture juniors who worked in counties throughout Iowa as extension trainees, and their answers probably wouldn't be too different.

When a trainee goes into a county at the beginning of a summer it doesn't take long to feel right at home, Jeannine says. She was welcomed right into all the community activities.

She found that her work also gave her no time to feel ill at ease. Soon after Jeannine arrived in the county, the full-time home economist took a two-week trip, and Jeannine assumed her duties as well as learned her own job.

A common expression describing extension is "your county is your classroom." Extension personnel are "extending" Iowa State College to the people in the state of Iowa, and this large-scale teaching program takes extension workers into every home and to every family of a county.

Jeannine did some of her extending by helping 4-H girls with their demonstrations. As the director of these productions she was on hand with information concerning facts and techniques of demonstrating. She said it was a real thrill to see some of the girls she had helped win blue ribbons at the state fair. One experience didn't seem as bright when two girls completed their demonstration, turned

around and promptly tipped a dishpan full of water over the stage. A few consoling words and a blue ribbon helped to ease the embarrassment.

Jeannine found that "extending" also included writing columns for newspapers and other publications. She became acquainted with radio through interviews and discussions. Other trainees completely or partially planned programs for television.

Having regular office hours was something new to Jeannine. While in the office she learned of other phases of extension—filling out records, resources available from the college or in the county office, the meaning of extension law, and extension philosophies.

Each trainee must take on a special project during the summer. She must plan the project from the beginning, taking care of all arrangements, correspondence, and preparations. Jeannine was responsible for the style show in her county. She planned each detail with a smooth final performance in mind.

A part of each summer is 4-H Camp. Jeannine found it was a different experience to go as a trainee. But her problems in leading singing or discussions, or teaching were doubled, for the first morning of camp she opened her mouth to speak and nothing happened. A severe case of laryngitis left her with little to say. Happily, her voice returned in time for 4-H convention.

Her experience ranged from working with the International Farm Youth Exchange (IFYE) student who was staying in the county to making stall cards for animal exhibits at the county fair. She worked with 4-H'ers, parents, judges, and extension personnel. She talked to hundreds through a radio broadcast and met people on personal visits to homes. She slept through a rain storm in a tent at 4-H Camp and hunted for her pajamas in a dorm at Iowa State College.

What is it to be an extension trainee?

It's fun, work, and experience packed into one.